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2-15342

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D/I Hq USAF
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Auth C/S USAF
30 August 1950

30 AUG 1950

AFOIE-CI
Maj Evans/ma/71379
w/30 Aug 50

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY FINLETTER

SUBJECT: Chinese Communist Participation in Korean Hostilities

1. Pursuant to your request transmitted by Colonel Ramsey D. Potts, USAF, herewith is a report on the Chinese Communist participation in the Korean hostilities.

2. There has been no reliable evidence to indicate that Chinese Communist units have participated in combat with the North Korean forces. There is considerable evidence to indicate that former members of the Chinese Communist forces of Korean descent have been transferred, during the past two years and particularly during the early months of 1950, from Chinese Communist units as individuals and incorporated into North Korean formations. The Army estimates that there are now 25,000 former members of the Chinese Communist Army of Korean descent in North Korean uniform. In addition, the Army estimates there are 70,000 similar type personnel in Manchuria available for transfer as individuals to North Korea for incorporation into North Korean ground units. The trend of reports from China and North Korea indicates that there has been a flow of former Chinese Communists of Korean descent from the Chinese Communist forces to North Korean units since the initiation of hostilities on 25 June 1950.

3. There are no reliable indications that the Chinese Communists are supporting the North Koreans with military supplies. There have been reports of sightings of former Japanese aircraft in Korea which were last believed to be in the possession of the Chinese Communists. There is a possibility that some Soviet military supplies have been diverted from the Chinese Communists to North Korea. The evidence available, however, indicates that the military supply, including armament and equipment, has come to North Korea from the USSR.

4. The enemy situation at the front in southern Korea is critical. Since early August, the best North Korean formations have been committed to action in a series of local attacks on a piecemeal basis with the result that there is now a critical shortage of trained military manpower available to the Communists from the forces estimated to be present in the theater of operations. Intelligence reports from the areas occupied by the enemy indicate frantic attempts to mobilize manpower. This type of untrained and inexperienced personnel will be of little use in the immediate future in opposing UN attacks in the Korean campaign.

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND813055
By LAW NARA, Date 3/6/07

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5. FEAF reports that there is increasing evidence that the enemy is preparing airfields for probable use by aircraft not known to be in Korea. Many old aircraft revetments have been repaired and construction of new revetments capable of sheltering twin-engine bombers or transports is proceeding apparently on a priority schedule. Many intelligence reports, among them a report from the British Consul at Mukden, state that Chinese Communist aircraft, varying in number from 75 to 300, are being transferred to Manchuria, and specifically to the two airfields at Antung on the Korean border.

6. On 24 August, the crew of a USAF RB-29 reported that an estimated forty bursts of heavy anti-aircraft fire was fired at the aircraft near Sinuiju, Korea. The firing was more accurate than most of the flak encountered to date. Such heavy flak along the Manchurian border clearly indicates that an important target is in this vicinity and that the Chinese Communists may be in the process of building up forces in the Antung area.

7. Propaganda charges by the Chinese Communist Government that US aircraft have violated the Manchurian border "five times" may be interpreted as an attempt to provide some sort of legal basis for retaliation by Chinese Communist Forces in the hostilities in Korea.

8. The Commanding General, Far East Air Forces, sent a personal redline message to the Chief of Staff, USAF, on 29 August to the effect that the 54th, 55th, 56th, and 74th Chinese Communist Armies all crossed the Yalu River and are now in North Korea. This report was received from a Chinese source and has been evaluated as B-3 by the Far East Air Forces.

9. Essentially the same report, differing only in detail, was contained in a front-page article of The New York Times on 29 August, datelined Taipei, 28 August to the effect that Nationalist China's Minister of Defense charged today that four Chinese Communist armies crossed the boundary from Manchuria into Korea last month. These were identified as the 55th, 56th, and 57th Armies and another unidentified army.

10. An analysis of the order of battle of the units mentioned in General Stratemeyer's report indicates that the 54th Chinese Communist Army was on the Fukien-Kwangsi border, that the 56th Army has been carried about half-way between Chingwangtao and Mukden. The existence of the 55th and 57th Armies has never been confirmed. The 74th Chinese Communist Army has never been noted.

11. Since the beginning of the war in Korea, there have been numerous reports emanating from Hong Kong, Taipei, and other Far Eastern sources to the effect that Lin Piao's Fourth Field Army has been moving

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from South China to the North, allegedly to intervene in the Korean campaign. The armies in the Fourth Field Army are in the 30 and 40 series. None of these armies has been located north of Hankow. For example, the most famous of the units in the Fourth Field Army are the 38th and 39th Armies. At last report, the 38th was in southwest China and the 39th at Hankow.

12. The Intelligence Division, US Army, has estimated that there are at present in Manchuria 400,000 military district troops (provincial forces), among which are the 70,000 Koreans mentioned in paragraph 3, foregoing. There are indications of the movement of elements of the Chinese Communist Fourth Field Army north of the Yellow River. The identity of the units and the size of the movement are unknown, except that it is possible that the 40th Army, with an estimated strength of 22,000 was included in the movement. According to the Army intelligence, there are no definite indications of the presence in Manchuria of any substantial portion of the Chinese Communist Fourth Field Army.

13. In summary, a review of the evidence available indicates that the report of Chinese Communist armies crossing into North Korea cannot be supported or disproved by the evidence presently available. The commitment of Chinese Communist units would probably require a major policy decision on the part of the Kremlin and approval by the Chinese Communists.

14. Because of the inconclusive and conflicting evidence, and the importance of the problem, the Director of Intelligence, USAF, recommended to the Chairman, Intelligence Advisory Committee on 29 August 1950, that an ad hoc committee be appointed to prepare an estimate of the likelihood or possibility of Chinese Communist military intervention in Korea.

S/ C. P. CABELL
Major General, USAF
Director of Intelligence

(Orig & Courtesy copy were not stamped when h.c. by Maj Richards, OIN D/O, after normal duty hrs, on 30 Aug 50.)

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